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ABSTRACT

This brief gives an overview of the topic of workplace literacy in the health care industry and lists program contacts. The following 35 organizations operate basic skills upgrading programs for health care workers: American Hospital Association; Chinese American Civic Association; Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training; BostonWorks; Continuing Education Institute; Consortium for Worker Education; Health and Hospital Workers Union District Council 1199; Service Employees International Union Local 144; City University of New York; Patient Learning Associates; National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute; Boston Private Industry Council; University of New England; Division of Adult Education and Literacy, U.S. Department of Education; Kanawha County Adult Basic Education Program (West Virginia); National Cancer Institute; Push Literacy Action Now; Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Kansas City; Washington Hospital Center; Brigham and Women's Hospital; Children's Hospital (Washington, D.C.); Greater Southeast Community Hospital; PAVE, The Education and Training Foundation; Middlesex Community College; New Mexico State University; Philadelphia Hospital and Health Care District 1199C; American Optometric Association; University of Arizona; Center for Literacy; Lafayette Adult Reading Academy; Long Island University; Clara Maass Medical Center; Massachusetts Department of Health and Hospitals; New York State Psychiatric Institute; and University of New Mexico. Each listing may include the following: organization name, acronym, program description, address, and telephone number. Nine annotated references are included. (NLA)

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Brief

Workforce & Workplace Literacy
No. 4 March 15, 1991

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Health Care Industry

INTRODUCTION

The health care industry will be one of the nation's fastest growing industries in the coming years. Many pressures on the industry make employee skills upgrading a necessity, especially for support personnel. Among these pressures are the changing health care needs of the aging American population; the increasing need for health care personnel to communicate clearly with patients (a growing and disproportionate number of people seeking medical care have limited basic skills and limited English-speaking ability); technological advances in treatment; heavy reliance on recent immigrants, low-skilled minorities (increasingly minority youth), and other educationally-disadvantaged groups in support and entry-level jobs (especially in nursing homes); time lost by managers and supervisors who must watch for support personnel mistakes; and high support staff turnover. [Note: Nurses aides, dietary staff, and other lower level workers have historically been paid low wages, thus contributing to the turnover rate.] Moreover, while rising costs and an increased emphasis on self care are in general reducing the length of hospital stays, many patients remaining for longer periods of time often require highly specialized attention, thus requiring more highly trained staff.

To an important degree, the quality of care depends heavily on the ability of support and entry-level staff--nursing aides, dietary aides, housekeeping and maintenance workers, and others--to perform their jobs well. These people must be able to communicate clearly with patients and to carry out instructions for administering medications and following nurses' orders and doctors' treatment plans. They must be able to operate new equipment and interpret the findings, follow strict measurements regarding patients' diets, know what procedures to follow in case of emergency, handle the day-to-day maintenance of their institutions, and so on--all requiring solid basic skills.

Other pressures on the health care industry are external, giving the industry reason to be concerned about the ability of patients and the general population to practice preventive and home health care. The volume of health-related information that Americans must now sift through and understand is enormous--stemming in part from new health hazards in the workplace (e.g. toxic substances), new health disorders such as AIDS and drug abuse, and new medications and health services available.

Awareness of these issues is growing within the industry, and already many hospitals, nursing homes, and allied groups have begun to offer employee basic skills services and to train higher level personnel in strategies and techniques for working with low-skilled workers. A number of initiatives are also in process to address the basic skills needs of patients.

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National health care associations, which can provide significant leadership and technical assistance, have for the most part not yet become seriously involved in literacy. However, there are some exceptions. The American Health Association, together with the American Society for Healthcare Human Resources, has begun a major long-term campaign. Specific disease-oriented groups, like the National Cancer Institute and the National Heart, Lung & Blood Institute, are beginning to develop easy-to-read health promotion and patient information materials. The American Optometric Association has also undertaken a special literacy project.

Contacts:

The following people are operating employee basic skills programs for health care workers... working on the literacy needs of patients...providing significant technical assistance... researching the impact of employee basic skills on health care...or operating grant programs in support of health care projects.

1. Beverly Rogers, Senior Staff, American Hospital Association, 840 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, IL 60611, (312) 280-3556. After a year of study by its literacy task force, the American Health Association is now working to encourage the CEOs of its 5,500 member hospitals and related professional and educational organizations to develop workplace skills programs for their employees. It recently published *Literacy in the Workforce: You Can't Afford Not to Care* (see "References" below), a booklet of challenges and guidelines for members. Rogers will continue to collect data on AHA projects related to employee basic skills in the health care industry.

2. Lynne Barsky, Skills Program Coordinator, Chinese American Civic Association, 90 Tyler Street, Boston, MA 02111, (617) 426-8673. With funding from the U.S. Department of Education, the Chinese American Civic Association is providing an on-site job-linked ESL instruction and career advancement program to support staff at the South Cove Manor Nursing Home in Boston's Chinatown. The program is recognized as an outstanding model among Massachusetts' various workplace projects. South Cove donates space for classes and gives employees released time to participate. Employees have regular input into the program's operation and are actively involved in recruitment, curriculum development, and management. Participation is voluntary and as of January 1991 more than 150 employees had completed the program.

3. Katherine Carroll-Day, Adult Literacy/Operations, Department of Employment and Training, Charles F. Hurley Building, 19 Staniford Street, Boston, MA 02114, (617) 727-6480. Ms. Carroll-Day represents the Department in the state's workplace education initiative, which includes several adult literacy projects in the health care field.

4. Cynthia Chorianopoulos, Director, BostonWorks, 2 Oliver Street - 9th Floor, Boston, MA 02109, (617) 423-3755. BostonWorks has been operating "Project Health Care" since 1989, an effort involving 17 teaching hospitals in the area. The focus is on job-linked instruction for entry-level workers, with special training also provided to supervisors.

5. Lloyd David, President, Continuing Education Institute, 163 Highland Avenue, Needham, MA 02194, (617) 449-4802. CEI runs on-site GED programs for Beth Israel Hospital and Children's Hospital in Boston; in CEI's nontraditional program, students earn credits for life

experience, especially that gained through their jobs. CEI also conducts basic skills programs for Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Massachusetts, and operates ESL programs at Brigham and Women's Hospital and in several nursing homes in the Boston area.

6. Francine Boren, Coordinator, Consortium for Worker Education, 247 West 54th Street, New York, NY 10019, (212) 621-0449. The Consortium consists of more than a dozen NY-based unions providing basic skills services to their members. The Consortium's basic skills programming takes a functional context approach, with curricula built around occupational themes and life experiences of the members being served. It is geared to helping workers maintain their current jobs or retrain for new ones before job loss--to be preventive rather than reactive. For example, the Consortium currently has under way a training program for home health care attendants to help them meet recently-mandated certification requirements. The program combines literacy instruction with training to develop technical skills needed for the job. Three other major Consortium-related efforts for workers in the health care industry are highlighted in entries 7, 8, and 9 below.

7. Jose Mata, Adult Education Director, Health and Hospital Workers Union District Council 1199, 300 West 43rd Street, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10036, (212) 582-1890, ext. 2354. The union runs basic skills classes for hospital and health care employees working as nurses aides or in the areas of housekeeping or dietary/food services where high school diplomas/GEDs are not required. Most participants are middle-aged, and many are immigrants who have met the requirements to obtain a residency card. Classes are scheduled at nine different locations to accommodate all three day shifts of workers. About 20 percent of the instructional materials are job-related.

8. Helen Purello, Assistant Director, Training and Upgrading Program, Service Employees International Union Local 144, 797 Eighth Avenue, New York, NY 10019, (212) 757-8875. The Training and Upgrading Program operates basic skills, GED, and college prep classes for its members--many of whom work in nursing homes and hospitals. Course offerings also include job-related basic computer, word processing, and medical records coding. Classes are held at Local 144's Eighth Avenue facility.

9. Dolores Perin, Project Director, Center for Advanced Study in Education, Graduate School, City University of New York, 33 West 42nd Street, 620NC New York, NY 10036, (212) 642-2937. Ms. Perin manages a research and demonstration project developed in partnership with the Consortium and three member unions to serve health care workers. Funded through a U.S. Department of Education workplace literacy grant, the project is designed for workers who are interested in entering associate-level programs to become registered nurses and/or qualifying for other specialized positions. Most are aged 40-50; all have high school diplomas or GEDs but are still lacking in the basic skills needed for college. The project has developed and is field testing a special language arts and math curriculum related to anatomy, physiology, chemistry, and everyday health care tasks. National dissemination of the curriculum and guidelines will be made by the end of 1991 through the ERIC network. Anyone wishing to obtain the materials can also write to Perin and ask to be put on a mailing list.

10. Leonard and Cecilia Doak, Patient Learning Associates, 4 Chilham Court, Potomac, MD 20854, (301) 340-9894. This group is a health education consulting firm which gives workshops and training to health-care personnel and adult educators on how to communicate with adults having low literacy skills. Cecilia and Leonard Doak, together with Jane Root, in 1985 wrote *Teaching Patients with Low Literacy Skills* (see "References" below).

11. Karen Donato, Coordinator, Nutrition Education and Special Initiatives, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, National Institute of Health, Building 31, Room 4A18, Bethesda, MD 20892, (301) 496-1051. The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute has launched an effort to produce public health materials written at a readability level suitable for poorly-skilled adults. As a first step, it has just published a booklet on cholesterol and dietary change written at the 5th-grade level (see "References" below). Preliminary testing and reception among the health care community have been very positive. The Institute plans to disseminate the booklet through state health departments, clinics, HMOs, neighborhood health centers, and professional associations.

12. George Moriarty, Director, Project Protech, Boston Private Industry Council, 2 Oliver Street, Boston, MA 02110, (617) 423-3755. In September 1990, the U.S. Department of Labor granted $973,000 to the Boston Private Industry Council for development of a new four-year program for students pursuing careers in health care. In this program, the last two years of high school, the first two years of community college, and full-time work in a hospital are linked in an integrated, continuous program. Trainees who move through the program successfully will earn an Associate degree and a professional health care credential. Employers and educators are together developing the instruction.

13. Sue Plimpton, Assistant Director, Area Health Education Center Program, College of Osteopathic Medicine, University of New England, Hills Beach Road, Biddeford, ME 04005-9599, (207) 283-0171. In Maine, health care professionals have articulated the need for easier-to-read health materials not only for low-literate patients but also for general patient use. To respond to that need, the AHEC Program initiated a "Literacy and Health Promotion Project" in 1990. As a part of its activities, the Project has formed a statewide consortium of 14 major health agencies and six literacy experts, including consultant Jane Root, to work together in designing and producing new easy-to-read materials. "Using Child Safety Seats the Right Way," just off the press, is the first of 14 pamphlets to be developed by consortium members over the next several months and disseminated through a joint distribution plan.

14. Sarah Newcomb, Division of Adult Education & Literacy, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20202-7240, (202) 732-2390 or (202) 732-2272. The DAEL has given some $40 million in workplace literacy project grants since 1989; several of the funded projects involve nursing homes and hospitals.

15. Laura Fulton, Coordinator, Kanawha County Adult Basic Education Program, 1500 Greenbriar Street, Charleston, WV 25311, (304) 348-6626. This ABE program works with the West Virginia Dialysis Facilities and the Charleston Renal Group to offer basic skills classes to patients at local kidney dialysis centers. The patients normally spend several hours each week being treated at the centers and often do no more than sit and watch TV. The program gives them an opportunity to study for a high school diploma while undergoing treatment.

16. Wendy Mettger, Public Affairs Specialist, Office of Cancer Communications, National Cancer Institute, Building 31, Room 4B43, Bethesda, MD 20892, (301) 496-6792. The National Cancer Institute is beginning to address the needs of low-literate audiences for cancer-related health promotion and patient education information. Most of its currently available materials are written at a 10th-grade level or above. NCI will be working with its early detection, nutrition, tobacco, patient education, minority and older American program

staff to ensure that emphasis on and awareness of low-literacy issues are addressed as program themes and materials are developed. NCI will also continue to work with other federal agencies as they develop materials for low-level readers. Current materials in development include a series of nutrition education pieces for different ethnic audiences and a booklet which encourages women to get Pap tests.

17. Catherine Baker, Executive Director, Push Literacy Action Now, 1332 G Street SE, Washington, DC 20003, (202) 547-8903. PLAN, a community-based organization that has gained national recognition for its literacy work, recently completed a parent-child literacy program in prenatal and pediatric care centers and other settings. PLAN is currently developing training materials to help other organizations prepare easy-to-read materials for their marginally literate clients.

18. Jan Bell, Senior Specialist, Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Kansas City, PO Box 419071, Kansas City, MO 64141, (816) 395-2402. Ms. Bell has very recently implemented an on-site program at Blue Cross/Blue Shield in which ABE teachers will go over the Medicare guide with senior citizens to help them better understand it. At the same time instructors will be attuned to identify people with low-level reading abilities who need special help.

19. Kathryn Wall, Senior Trainer, Washington Hospital Center, Department 485, 110 Irving Street NW, Washington, DC 20010, (202) 877-6539. WHC has ongoing, on-site ESL classes and one-on-one tutoring for employees. The Center is also just implementing an on-site pilot program for three entry-level departments. It has recruited 20 people with little or no work history from the inner-city neighborhood and minority communities to participate in a three-week training session which will combine work readiness preparation and on-the-job training. During the course of the training, those needing help in the basic skills area will be referred to community resources or given special counseling and tutoring. At the end of the three weeks, participants will have the opportunity to apply for available positions or have their names placed on call for future employment. WHC also has an on-site computer program which enables it to assess skills of employees (voluntary on the part of employees) to help them identify their weaknesses and/or better match them with jobs. Employees can then use a computer software program to upgrade their skills.

20. Joan Ford, Health Careers Program Coordinator, Brigham and Women's Hospital, 75 Frances Street, Boston, MA 02115, (617) 732-4040. The Hospital operates on-site ABE and ESL programs for its employees, who are given paid released time. Job-related vocabulary and manuals are built into the programs to some extent, but a GED remains the goal of most students.

21. Anita Brady (Acting Manager) or Tori Jordan (Specialist), Human Resources Development, Children's Hospital, 111 Michigan Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20010, (202) 939-4660. The Hospital has entered into a partnership with the District of Columbia public schools and other area hospitals (see also #23) to offer ABE courses to its employees. Instruction is self-paced, ranging from zero proficiency to GED level. To protect employees' confidentiality, classes are held in a Hospital-owned facility about a mile away from the worksite. Employees are paid $5 for every two-hour period they attend classes. Prince George's County Literacy Council also provides in-home tutors for some Hospital employees. The Hospital has applied for a national workplace literacy grant to develop an eight-station computer literacy facility.

22. Stephanie Harvey, Director of Recruitment, Education and Development, Greater Southeast Community Hospital, 1310 Southern Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20032, (202) 574-6010. The Hospital works with an instructor from the District of Columbia public schools to offer its employees classes at all levels--GED, pre-GED, and basic skills. The employees are paid for one hour of every two hours spent in class and are referred to community resources if they need more extensive help. The Hospital also runs a high school intern program in which students spend afternoons working in the hospital. One day a week of that program focuses on basic skills and worker preparation. In addition, the Hospital is working with PAVE, The Education and Training Foundation (see also #23). The Hospital was chosen as an assessment site to which anyone from the community (including its employees) can come to have their basic skills levels assessed by PAVE. If remediation is needed, community residents/employees can then use an in-house computer software program to upgrade their skills.

23. Dean Griffin, President, PAVE, The Education and Training Foundation, 208 North Washington Street, 2nd Floor, Alexandria, VA 22314, (703) 683-0547. PAVE is a publicly funded foundation whose mission is to encourage educators and the private sector to work together in the delivery of education and training services. PAVE offers the private sector access to a network of vocational/technical institutions that are ready to respond to industry needs; a communications channel to education leaders regarding emerging employment needs, industry standards, and technology changes; and a means to support and influence the direction of vocational/technical education--including training for the "jobs of the future." To help address the shortage of qualified health care workers in the Washington, DC area, PAVE is managing an "Employee Growth and Development for Health Care Workers" joint venture. Partners in the joint venture include health care employers, educational institutions, and agencies concerned with economic development such as the Chamber of Commerce and the Private Industry Council.

24. Marilyn Laskowski-Sachnoff, Chair of Hotel, Restaurant & Institution Management Department and Director of Dietetic Technology, Middlesex Community College, PO Box 3050, Edison, NJ 08818-3050, (908) 906-2538. Ms. Laskowski-Sachnoff has worked with low-literate and limited-English-speaking dietary personnel in New York City-area hospitals for many years. She has helped these workers deal with their limited skills in a variety of innovative ways--e.g. by color coding job materials, urging the employees to improve their English by speaking it on the job, and developing new training approaches in technical areas like microbiology. Even though the workers were dealing with high-tech equipment, with on-the-job training and classroom instruction (in English) they were able to master the necessary skills. Ms. Laskowski-Sachnoff presently teaches dietary personnel enrolled in community college courses, who themselves often require basic skills upgrading.

25. Paul Meyer, Assistant Professor, Department of English, New Mexico State University, Dept. 3E, Las Cruces, NM 88003-0001, (505) 646-1418. Working with a colleague and graduate assistants, Meyer runs on-site programs (funded through a U.S. Department of Education workplace literacy grant) in a local hospital. They teach 6-8 week modular courses for hospital employees, who are given paid released time. Topics have included oral and written communications skills, and a course on "communications skills for supervisors" is planned. They also conduct basic skills and ESL workshops at the hospital and act as liaisons to refer people to community agencies which provide literacy instruction. Another focus of their effort is to improve hospital workplace documentation, which has included redesigning on-the-job forms and rewriting patient information materials to make them clearer and, in some cases, bilingual.

26. James Ryan, Executive Director, Training and Upgrading Fund, Philadelphia Hospital and Health Care District 1199C, 1319 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107, (215) 735-5555. Over the last 18 months, in response to legislation requiring nurses aides to become certified, the union has developed curricula and run courses for 600-700 hospital and health care workers. Over 90 percent of the enrollees--many of whom were older women and/or minorities--completed the training, and feedback has been very positive. Other basic skills classes for the union members aim specifically to prepare people to enter schools of allied health in the Philadelphia area. Basic skills classes are usually offered at the union hall or nearby union classroom facilities rather than at the worksites. The union is investigating the possibility of offering instruction in a more job-functional context in areas in which employees have identified weaknesses.

27. Reynold Malmer, Director, Communications Center, American Optometric Association, 243 N. Lindbergh Boulevard, St. Louis, MO 63141, (314) 991-4100. Since 1988 the AOA, which represents over 26,000 optometrists, has been encouraging its members to establish eye care programs for students in local literacy organizations. Among other activities, the AOA has published a fact sheet for local optometrists and literacy groups, called *Facts About Vision/Project Literacy U.S. (PLUS)*, covering steps they can take to develop collaborative projects. It has also published *Do Vision Problems Cause Adult Reading Problems?*, a brochure to help tutors identify typical symptoms of vision difficulties in low-literacy adults. (See "References" below). Several state-level associations have also developed active programs. The New Mexico Optometric Association, for example, works with the Mayor's Commission on Adult Literacy in Albuquerque, giving free screenings and vision education to literacy students. The optometrists provide follow-up care and corrective lenses with fees based on ability to pay. In Texas, a Houston-based optometric firm, called Today's Vision, has been providing comprehensive eye exams for literacy students at the Houston READ Commission Learning Center.

28. Barry Weiss, MD, College of Medicine, Department of Family and Community Medicine, University of Arizona, 1450 North Cherry, Tucson, AZ 85712, (602) 626-6184. Weiss has recently completed a research project in which a health status assessment was done of about 200 low-skilled adults in the Pima County (AZ) ABE program. The results suggest that there is a significant relationship between poor literacy skills and poor health. A second project under way is evaluating whether health care costs to Arizona's medicaid-equivalent health care plan vary with the literacy levels of individual enrollees. Confirmation of the relationship between illiteracy, poor health, and increased health care costs to the nation could provide "medical justification" for funding for programs to improve literacy skills. Weiss is also developing a collection of "graded" consent forms for different surgical procedures, written at the third or fourth grade level for patients with limited skills.

29. Jo Ann Weinberger, Executive Director, Center for Literacy, 636 South 48th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19143, (215) 474-1CFL. The Center coordinates a workplace literacy program for employees at Presbyterian Hospital to help them develop the skills needed to advance their careers. The employees range in age from 19 to 60 and have varying educational needs. In addition to providing group instruction, the Center works with students individually using job-specific materials. Presbyterian Hospital pays for the voluntary program, and employees attend on their own time.

30. Beth Hensley, Project Director, Lafayette Adult Reading Academy, 604 North Sixth Street, Lafayette, IN 47901, (317) 742-1595. The Academy operates a two-stranded on-site program at St. Elizabeth's Hospital. In one strand, which follows a "bottom up" approach, the

Academy provides basic skills instruction based entirely on job-specific tasks in the areas of nursing, radiology, environmental services (housekeeping), and nutrition. The program will be expanded to the admissions, security, and maintenance staffs in the near future. In the second strand, a "top down" approach, the Academy helps administrators rewrite training manuals and redesign hospital forms to make them more accessible to workers and to promote more efficient and cost-effective services. The special curricula and related information from this project (it has U.S. Department of Education funding) will be disseminated through the ERIC network and should be available in November or December 1991.

31. Ed Maietta, Project Director, Brooklyn Workplace Literacy Project, Long Island University, One University Plaza, Room LLC-519, Brooklyn, NY 11201, (718) 403-1019, ext. 2206. The Brooklyn Workplace Literacy Project operates job-related basic skills programs in three Brooklyn hospitals. Program design was based on needs assessment and job task analyses, which included discussions with management, floor supervisors, and employees themselves. Course offerings include basic math, effective reading for hospital workers, oral and written communications, ESL, and a more advanced class in medical terminology. Hospital materials are incorporated into the instructional program in many instances. This effort is sponsored by Long Island University and the local Private Industry Council, with funding from a 1990 U.S. Department of Education workplace literacy grant. The staff has found that attendance is more consistent and progress more dramatic when employees get released time. Thus, in applying for federal refunding they will propose that employees receive at least one-half paid released time.

32. Suzanne Burrell, Training and Development Specialist, Clara Maass Medical Center, One Franklin Avenue, Belleville, NJ 07109, (201) 450-2950. In cooperation with Union County College, the Clara Maass Medical Center runs a "Learn More/Be More" basic skills and ESL program for its employees. The program is conducted on site in 10-week cycles. All subjects are offered at two different skills levels. Employees attend class during their normal work day (paid released time for two hours a week). The second semester of classes experienced a 75 percent enrollment increase over the first, and program offerings will be expanded in the fall of 1991.

33. Paul Guldenzoph, Coordinator, Boston Health Care Workplace Education Program, Department of Health and Hospitals, Room 111, South Block Nurses Building, 818 Harrison Avenue, Boston, MA 02118, (617) 534-5438. The Department operates two programs in cooperation with the unions serving the health care industry and the Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor. The first is an open-entry, open-exit basic skills program designed to help people get their GED. The second is a 16-week science studies skills course to prepare employees who want to become nurses or technicians for college. It includes techniques for studying and taking notes during lectures. The programs serve employees of the Boston City Hospital and two chronic care facilities. ESL courses will be offered in the near future.

34. Sandra Rosenblum, Director of Education and Training, New York State Psychiatric Institute, 722 West 168th Street, New York, NY 10032, (212) 960-2533. The Institute operates on-site basic skills and ESL programs for employees, who attend during working hours. Job-related vocabulary and materials are integrated into the program. Conversational Spanish and GED programs in English and Spanish are also offered on site.

35. Nina Wallerstein, Assistant Professor, Department of Family and Community Medicine, University of New Mexico, 2400 Tucker NE, Albuquerque, NM 87131, (505) 277-3253, and Elsa Auerbach, Assistant Professor, Department of English, University of Massachusetts,

Boston, MA 02125, (617) 287-5763 or 287-6700. Professors Wallerstein and Auerbach have developed new "learner-centered" curricular materials for low-literate adults. Their work is based largely on the philosophy of Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, which emphasizes building learners' critical thinking skills so that they can act, make decisions, and otherwise gain control over their lives. Professor Wallerstein also works with public health issues in minority language communities in the Southwest. In 1987, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company put out *ESL for Action: Problem Posing at Work,* a student workbook and accompanying teacher's guide co-authored by Professors Wallerstein and Auerbach (see "References"). It takes a problem-solving approach to learning English and developing thinking skills in ESL classes and workplace programs. A major portion of the material is built around workplace safety and personal health issues.

References:

Literacy in the Workforce: You Can't Afford Not to Care, a 1990 12-page booklet published by the American Hospital Association, gives guidance to hospital administrators on why and how to develop an employee basic skills program. Single copies are $7 to members and $12 to nonmembers; quantity discounts are available. Postage and handling charges are extra. Contact American Hospital Association, 840 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, IL 60611, or to charge orders call (800) 242-2626. Specify item #049739 when ordering.

Teaching Patients with Low Literacy Skills, by Cecilia Doak, Leonard Doak, and Jane Root, is a book aimed at increasing the ability of health care professionals to help patients with low-literacy levels understand instructions about hospital procedures, medication, and other health-related matters. Available for $15.95 from J.B. Lippincott Co., PO Box 1580, Hagerstown, MD 21741, (800) 638-3030.

Eat Right to Lower Your High Blood Cholesterol is a 14-page brochure, written at 5th grade reading level, developed for patients with high blood cholesterol. The conversational text, presented in large typeface with several illustrations, explains the significance and importance of reducing high blood cholesterol and focuses on food choices and preparation--practical information that patients can apply to their own eating patterns. Charts list foods high and low in saturated fat and cholesterol. A tear-out "shopping list" of heart-healthy foods is provided to help patients when they shop. To obtain the publication, write to the National Cholesterol Education Program, 4735 Bethesda Avenue, Suite 530, Bethesda, MD 20814-4820. Specify NIH Publication No. 90-2972.

Do Vision Problems Cause Adult Reading Problems? and Facts About Vision/Project Literacy U.S. (PLUS) are recent brochures put out by the American Optometric Association. The first is a guide for tutors to help them identify typical symptoms of vision difficulties in low-literate adults. The second is a fact sheet containing ideas and suggestions on how local optometrists and literacy groups can work together. Both are free from the Communications Center, American Optometric Association, 243 N. Lindbergh Boulevard, St. Louis, MO 63141, (314) 991-4100.

ESL for Action: Problem Posing at Work, by Nina Wallerstein and Elsa Auerbach, takes a problem-solving approach to learning English and thinking skills in workplace and ESL programs. The teacher's guide ($6.50) is applicable in a wide variety of contexts; the student workbook ($12.75) is a workplace-oriented curriculum. The material has a major focus on workplace safety and personal health issues. Available from Addison-Wesley, Route 128, Reading, MA 01887, (617) 944-3700.

Do You Understand: Communicating with the Non-English Speaking Patient is a handbook ($15) and trainer's guide ($6.50) developed by Literacy Volunteers of America for use in learning to communicate with foreign-born, limited ESL patients. Available from Literacy Volunteers of America, 5795 Widewaters Parkway, Syracuse, NY 13214, (315) 445-8000.

Channing L. Bete Company, 200 State Road, South Deerfield, MA 01373, (800) 628-7733. Bete publishes simply illustrated and simply written materials which give health care and related information to adults with limited literacy skills.

"Teaching About AIDS," Rachel Martin (ed.), Winter 1990 issue of Focus on Basics, a newsletter for adult literacy practitioners. Available at $4 a copy from World Education, 210 Lincoln Street, Boston, MA 02111, (617) 482-9485.

Workforce 2000: Work and Workers for the 21st Century was prepared by the Hudson Institute for the U.S. Department of Labor and published in June 1987. This groundbreaking report has already had a powerful impact on national understanding of the workforce and workplace illiteracy problem. It was the first serious and comprehensive effort to analyze current and future workforce literacy and education retraining needs in the context of national demographic, economic, and social trends. Among other things it confirms that even though health care jobs will increase during the next decade or so, the pool of available workers will significantly lack the basic skills required for those jobs. The full report is available for $4.50 from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402.

Copies of this Brief are available from BCEL for ~~$3.00~~ $5.00 each prepaid.